



# ***NEWS RELEASE***

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## **Licenses Suspended for Modesto Veterinarian and Veterinary Clinic**

### ***State Board Action Stems from July Arrest for Animal Cruelty***

SACRAMENTO -- The California Department of Consumer Affairs' Veterinary Medical Board (VMB) suspended the licenses of a Modesto veterinary clinic and its managing veterinarian as the result of an investigation this summer into animal cruelty charges and unlicensed practice.

Two Interim Suspension Orders (ISOs) were issued September 13, 1) suspending the Veterinary Premise Permit of the Pelandale Veterinary Hospital and 2) suspending the Veterinary license of the hospital's managing licensee, George Ferguson, D.V.M.

"Suspending Dr. Ferguson's license and shutting down the hospital was necessary to stop ongoing unlicensed activity that was a threat to the public and to their pets. The suspensions prevent Dr. Ferguson from continuing to aid and abet unlicensed activity at the hospital pending a revocation hearing," said Sue Geranen, the Executive Officer of the VMB.

On July 12 the owner of the clinic, Mahmoud Ahmed Kalil, was arrested by officials of the Stanislaus County District Attorney's Office and the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) Division of Investigation on a felony charge of animal cruelty, and on misdemeanor charges of theft and practicing veterinary medicine without a license. Kalil's license to practice veterinary medicine had been revoked in 1988 for negligence, incompetence, fraud and unprofessional conduct.

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Subsequent investigation found that Ferguson, who was the hospital managing licensee, spent about half a day a week at the clinic and rarely treated animals there. Ferguson admitted that he did not realize that Kalil was practicing veterinary medicine without a license until Kalil was arrested for it, and says he did not realize that he was listed as the treating veterinarian for animals he never saw or treated. However, Ferguson took no action subsequent to the arrest to prevent Kalil from continuing to work.

Dr. Kalil's arrest last July was the result of an investigation prompted by nearly a dozen consumer complaints. In one instance, Kalil improperly performed a procedure to remove a growth off a dog's eye. The dog's eye was injured in the procedure, but was successfully treated by a licensed veterinarian.

"The managing licensee of a veterinary facility is responsible, under the law, for the veterinary medicine performed and for all other activities occurring at the hospital," said Geranen.

The suspensions of the hospital premise permit and Dr. Ferguson's license to practice veterinary medicine in California will remain in effect until such time that there is a final decision on the accusations against the clinic and Dr. Ferguson.

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